



State of Louisiana

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Baton Rouge

70804-9004

KATHLEEN BABINEAUX BLANCO
GOVERNOR

POST OFFICE BOX 94004
(225) 342-7015

September 20, 2005

The Honorable George W. Bush
President
The White House
Washington, DC 20502

Dear Mr. President:

As the state of Louisiana moves from search and rescue to long-term recovery, I believe it is not only appropriate but essential to initiate a full-scale examination of the preparation for and the response to Hurricane Katrina.

This disaster was of such a magnitude that it will certainly have significant national implications regarding the response to future events such as a natural disaster or a potential terrorist attack. For these reasons, it is imperative that the investigation into the response to Katrina be comprehensive, probing and non-partisan.

As I said in my speech to the Louisiana Legislature last week, I take full responsibility for all actions at the state level, just as you took responsibility for actions at the federal level. Like all Americans, I appreciate the comments you made in your recent speech to the nation in which you promised that this government will learn the lessons of Hurricane Katrina. Only an independent, nonpartisan commission investigation that commands full support from the executive and legislative branches will accomplish what we need – a thorough, comprehensive review which is only concerned with getting to the truth.

The independent 9-11 Commission provides a valuable model. It has been widely praised for its objectivity and its comprehensive proposals that addressed the shortcomings in the nation's homeland security structure.

The American people deserve the facts. After all, while this was an event caused by the forces of nature, it certainly exposed America's vulnerabilities to foreign forces – and those vulnerabilities must be thoroughly analyzed and corrected. I am hopeful that you will join with me and others who have called for an independent commission to investigate this tragedy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Kathleen Babineaux Blanco".

Kathleen Babineaux Blanco
Governor
State of Louisiana